REMARKS

Claims **1-6, 8-18, and 21** are pending in the application.

Claims **1-8, 14, 15, 19 and 20** stand rejected.

Claims **9-13 and 16-18** stand objected.

Please cancel, without prejudice, claims **7, 19, and 20**.

Claim **1** has been amended to include the limitations of cancelled dependent claim **7**.

Claim **11** has been amended to correct an informality.

Claim **14** has been amended to include the limitations of canceled dependent claim **19**.

Claim **21** has been added to replace canceled claim 20.

No new subject matter has been claimed in any of the amended or added claims.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claim 11 because of informalities. Applicants have corrected the informalities and respectfully request that the objections to claim 11 be withdrawn.

The Examiner also objected to claims 9-13 and 16-18, but stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have added claim 21 which includes the limitations of objected claim 10 which has been deemed allowable by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the limitations of claim 21 be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2, 6-8, 14, 19, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Liang et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,781,529 ("Liang").

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 14 to include the limitations of dependent claims 7 and 19, respectively.

As generally required by independent claim 14, independent claim 1 recites a method for:

> a first network switch receiving a message at one of a plurality of interfaces to the first network switch, wherein the message comprises data and a data transit list (DTL);
> the first network switch generating first data as a function of both the data and first interface identifier data, wherein the first interface identifier data corresponds to the one of the plurality of interfaces to the first network switch and wherein generating the first data comprises concatenating the first interface identifier data with the data;
> the first network switch replacing the data in the message with the first data thereby creating a first modified message;
> the first network switch outputting the first modified message at another of the plurality of interfaces to the first network switch.

In response to the first Office Action dated April 6, 2005, Applicants argued that there is a clear distinction between "the data" of the message received by the first network switch and the "DTL" of the message received by the first network switch. Independent claims 1, 14, and 20 were amended to clarify this distinction.

The final Office Action states that the claimed "generating first data as a function of both the data and first interface identifier data" is taught by Liang at Fig. 4, Fig. 5, and col. 6, lines 1-16. Liang states the following:

> According to the invention, and as seen in FIG. 3, a "Routing DTL" information element is added by the source node to the level 3 SETUP request of the caller. In a preferred embodiment

> of the invention, the *Routing DTL IE is between six and sixty bytes in length, and as seen in FIG. 4 is essentially a concatenation of six-byte elements*. Each six-byte element is formatted to provide certain desirable information which will permit a call to be routed from a source to a destination. The preferred format of each six-byte element is seen in FIG. 5. A first byte (byte 0) of the six-byte element is a node identification (e.g., APEX switch ID) which contains the node number which will be processing the DTL. The next two bytes *(bytes 1 and 2) describe the node input and output ports* which are receiving and sending the message. Since the preferred APEX switch identifies ports via "slots" and "links", bytes 1 and 2 are broken out as an "input slot ID" field, and "input link" field, and "output slot" field, and an "output link" field as shown in FIG. 5, although it will be appreciated that other switches might simply identify ports.
>
> Liang, col. 5, line 66 – col. 6, line 18 (emphasis added)

In response to Applicants' arguments in the first Office Action that address the deficiencies of the referenced sections of Liang, the Examiner refers to col. 7, lines 56-65 of Liang in another attempt to show the claimed "generating first data as a function of both the data and first interface identifier data":

> As aforementioned, the CALL SETUP message is formatted with a routing DTL information element, and that information element includes a *concatenation of six byte elements* which according to a preferred aspect of the invention includes a four bit flag field. In accord with the invention, the four flags include a "process" flag, a "link up" flag, a "bandwidth" flag, and a "last node" flag. The "process" flag is used to indicate whether an element of the DTL has been processed by a node. Thus, when a node receives the DTL, it looks for the first element of the DTL which has not had the process flag set. That element should include the node ID of the receiving node. Upon finding the appropriate DTL element, the receiving node changes the process flag of the element, *inserts* the input slot ID and input link (i.e., the receiving port) values in their appropriate fields, and designates a VPI/VCI for that element. Then, the receiving node forwards the message with the updated DTL to the output port designated by the DTL. (Liang, col. 7, lines 48-65, emphasis added)

Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 14 to include the limitation in which generating the first data comprises concatenating the first interface identifier data with the data. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that concatenating the first interface identifier data with the data is shown in Liang at col. 7, lines 48-63. However, the cited section of Liang specifically states that the concatenation occurs with respect to "six bye elements" (see italics), not with the first interface identifier data. Thus, even if the first interface identifier data is part of a six byte element, the cited section of Liang shows a concatenation of the six byte element, not a concatenation of the first interface identifier data as claimed by Applicants.

Thus, the cited section of Liang fails to teach or disclose the first network switch generating first data as a function of both the data and first interface identifier data as claimed by Applicants. Further, in view of claims 7, 19, and 20 having been cancelled herein, the rejections to these claims are moot. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1-2, 6, 8, and 14 as being anticipated by Liang.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-5 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liang. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As stated above with respect to the § 102 rejection, Liang fails to show the claimed first data being generated as a function of both the data and the first interface identifier data. Because dependent claims 3-5 and 15 add additional limitations to their otherwise allowable base claims, Applicants urge the Examiner to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of dependent claims 3-5 and 15.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5089.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop **AF**, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on **November 28, 2005**.

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11/28/05 — Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

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